

**The  
Business  
of the  
Month**

# "Depot Street Market"

*Sue Turley, owner*

**Give a brief description of your business.**

Depot Street is a gourmet take and bake market. We have the fresh ingredients to prepare delicious meals that are ready for the oven, stove or grill. We have an extensive menu of 40 to 50 chicken, pasta, seafood, pork and beef choices, as well as appetizers, sides, and desserts. Every day we make a selection of our menu fresh, and we constantly keep plenty of everything in the freezer. We aim to save our customers precious time, money and hassle—all they do is stop by, pick up dinner and throw it in the oven. We strive to accommodate the needs of our customers—with this in mind, we have a wide selection of gluten-free choices. If someone has another food allergy, we will prepare a meal just for them with that ingredient removed. Every week we feature one of our menu items at \$2 off, and we are always coming up with new deals.

One of the "hidden" benefits of our business model is that customers learn quickly that when they plan their meals for the week around our menu, they don't have to spend an hour in the grocery store, lug the food home, put it away, then make dinner! That's a big time savings!

**How long have you been in business?**

In my head, I've been in business since high school. Finally, I

got to live my dream by opening my store in November 2007.

**How did you get started?**

We started as a franchise with a different model, but we learned quickly that our customers did not want to come in the store to assemble their own meals as originally planned. They liked how we did it, and we liked the efficiencies of getting the entrees together without having to clean up after customer sessions. When the original franchise company started to go belly-up in late 2008, we were able to strike out on our own. We went independent as The Depot Street Market at the first of the year.

**What should people know about you and your business?**

We are all about quality and customer service. Sometimes our customers just want dinner that night. We encourage them to call ahead or just stop in to see what we have fresh. Or, we can deliver free within the Duxbury zip code. Some customers want to feed a crowd. We have family-sized entrees for every menu item that feed four to six people. We sell a lot of regular sized entrees that feed two to three people. Our frequent buyer program allows our regular customers to earn free meals. Customers can keep up with us on our Web site, join our e-mail list, become fans of Depot Street on FaceBook, or follow us on our YouTube chan-

nel. Our most dedicated, and hungry customers actually follow us on Twitter!

**What is the best business advice you ever received?**

Adapt to market conditions! If your model isn't working, change it!

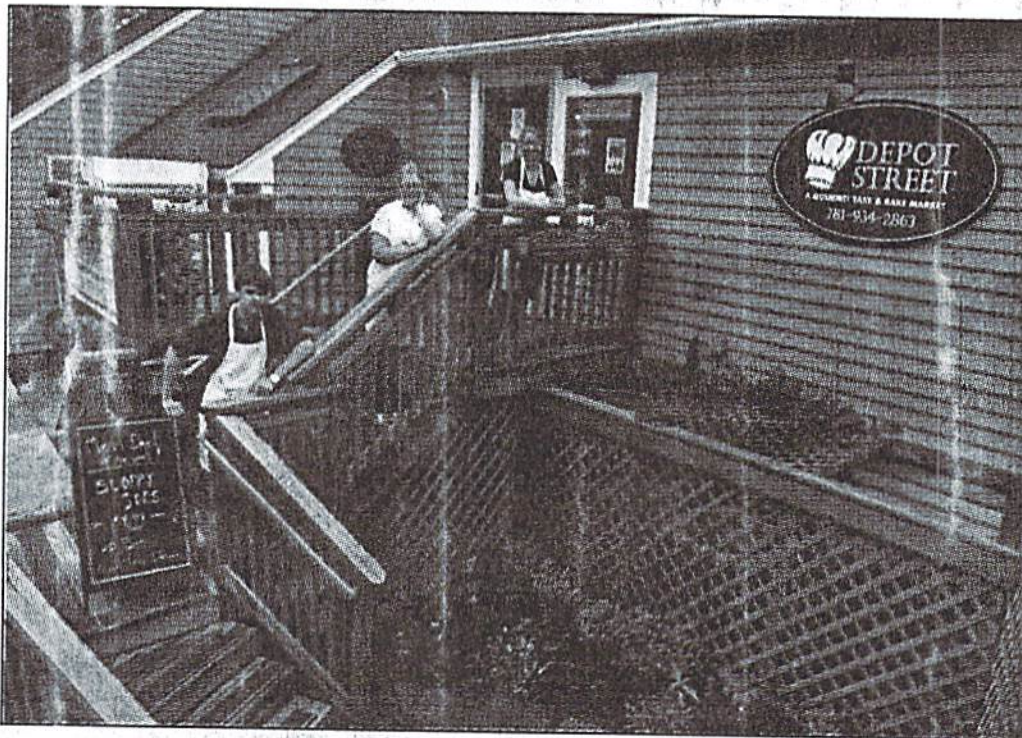
**Tell us a memorable story about your business.**

Just a few weeks after opening, we lost electricity during a winter storm. With nearly \$7,000 invested in fresh ingredients, my family stayed up all night making everything into meals, which we stored in the freezer. I remember sitting on the floor not sure whether to laugh or cry. The next day, with power restored, thankfully before the walk-in freezer rose above 32 degrees, we launched our first "freezer sale." New customers streamed in and we ended up with an enormous growth in sales, thanks to Mother Nature. Now we still hold freezer sales the last Saturday of every month.

**Tell us about a mistake you made in business. What did you learn from it?**

One of our employees learned quickly that paprika and cayenne pepper may look alike, but are not interchangeable! Yikes! We had a crazy but productive day tracking down our customers who had purchased the "extra zesty" pesto parmesan chicken to





STAFF PHOTOS/CHRIS BERNSTEIN

Mike Turley, Maddy Clark, and Sue Turley of Depot St. Market

give them free replacement meals. Some of them even liked the zesty version! We learned that our customers become even more dedicated to us when they realize that we care enough to fix our mistakes. We also learned to carefully monitor the cayenne pepper!

**If you could wave a magic wand and make any change in your industry that you wanted, what would it be?**

I'd like to be the Fairy Godmother of food prices! They go up and down, but we can't easily set our entrees to "market price" like the restaurants do. More stable costs would help us forecast and plan better.

**What's the best thing about your job?**

Every day, I come to work and feel this rush: It is so cool to have my own business, to be working for myself, my fortunes rising or falling based on my own decisions. It's scary, but it's such a joy, as well. And to top it off, I get to interact every day with great people in my own community. I meet new folks, feed them, and they come back with a smile. How cool is that!?

**So, how's business these days, anyway?**

By keeping our wits about us, listening to what our customers want and quickly giving it to them, we have been able to thrive in an economy on fumes. But people still get hungry for great food, and don't want to spend all day shopping, chopping, cooking and cleaning up. And every night can't be pizza night. Depot Street Market is about getting our customers an extraordinary product less expensively than if they bought the ingredients and did

it themselves. It's a no-brainer! People try Depot Street, then tell their friends. Our business is growing steadily by word of mouth.

**Depot Street Market is located at 35 Depot Street across from Tsang's in the Duxbury Marketplace.**

*Business of the Month is a regular feature of the Duxbury Reporter. If you have a business, or know of one, that you would like to see here, contact editor Matthew Nadler at [mnadler@cnc.com](mailto:mnadler@cnc.com) or 781-837-4555*